

Appendix B: Stakeholder Process

Stakeholder Process

James City County recognizes that the public and other stakeholders, including members of the business community and local government staff, play a vital role in the development and implementation of a watershed management plan. Stakeholders have firsthand experience with the issues confronting a watershed and often have insights regarding historic changes in the watershed or the acceptability of proposed actions. Stakeholders bring multiple concerns regarding the future of the watershed, maintaining or improving the quality of life, mitigating potential property loss, maintaining or improving economic opportunity, among others. Furthermore, stakeholders are often the motivating force for shaping local behaviors or engaging local decision-makers. In the end, stakeholders will have to live with the decisions resulting from the watershed planning process.

As stakeholders bring to the table the issues that are important to them, their participation gives them a stake in the outcome and helps to ensure the implementation of the plan. James City County uses a series of public meetings and comment periods to promote stakeholder involvement. Two meetings are held with watershed stakeholders; first to introduce the results of the baseline assessment, and second to solicit input on proposed goals and strategic actions. After each meeting, draft materials were available for public on the County's website and at area libraries.

After receiving input from residents and other stakeholders on what goals the community deemed important, the Gordon Creek Watershed Management Plan goals and strategic actions were developed.

The results of the Stakeholder process for the Gordon Creek Watershed include:

1. Meeting 1, October 16, 2007: Baseline Findings
 - a. Stakeholder Comments
2. Meeting 2, March 11, 2010: Draft Watershed Management Plan
 - a. Stakeholder Comments

October 16, 2007
Gordon Creek Stakeholder Meeting
Meeting Notes

Introductory presentations were followed by stakeholder breakout groups where issues and concerns were discussed as well as goals for the watershed plan. The following notes were taken during the report out portion of the stakeholder meeting.

Issues

- Flooding near Matoaka Elementary School
- Low density development might not have more impervious cover
- Restrict burning

Goals

Stormwater

- Require post development runoff to be less than pre development runoff. (retrofit existing roads such as Centerville Rd).
- Provide incentive programs to treat stormwater
- For new development, use LID practices (especially along Centerville Road)
- Look at retrofit opportunities for existing Centerville Road drainage
- Increase stormwater management controls (include water quality control)
- Establish higher level of stormwater management upstream of Jolly Pond

Planning

- Require 5 acre minimum lot size
- Document developable and undevelopable lands within Gordon Creek Watershed
- Preserve rural character of the watershed consider cluster dev., put restrictions on amt of land that can be developed, conservation restriction
- Encourage conservation development

Education

- Develop HOA's and make residents aware of the watershed they live in, how they affect it and what they can do on their lots
- Taylor existing "PRIDE" program to Gordon creek specific concerns - infiltration, tree preservation for forestry and agricultural operations
- Everyone living in the watershed should see themselves as a stakeholder in the quality of the watershed.

Natural Resource Protection

- Identify locations of rare/special/unique natural resources. Concentrate efforts on protection of these resources (protection of natural resources)
- Protect watershed without reducing development
- Examine existing natural areas for enhancing biodiversity
- Establish a 500 ft mainstem stream buffer on intermittent streams

Misc.

- Increase erosion and sediment control beyond the state requirements
- Restrict development by restricting drinking water withdrawal permits; increase water withdrawal requirements
- Investigate ongoing water quality monitoring at the landfill- there were past contamination issues of drinking water wells.
- Stream/ponds run with mud during runoff events
- Keep impervious cover low
- The County should pay for 5-yr septic clean-outs.
- Speak to long time residents of Gordon Creek and document their experiences on the creek

Staff from the County and Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc (VHB) presented information on the baseline report from 2007 and on the proposed watershed goals and strategies. There were general questions about the history of land use in the watershed and whether it was more agricultural or forested, about environmental impacts from the now-closed landfill, and about the historical significance of the Jolly Pond Dam. Other general questions included how the cost information was determined, whether the plan would include a specific timeline for implementation, and whether there was consideration of lost opportunity costs connected to any proposed expanded resource protection area (RPA).

Participants then broke into three groups and answered two questions with respect to the draft goals and strategies, as presented:

- What issues or concerns haven't been addressed but need to be?
- What are the most important strategic actions to include in the plan?

The comments below were recorded during the reporting session:

1. What issues or concerns haven't been addressed but need to be?

- Add exclusion to any new development incentives for family subdivisions
- Include current and future impervious cover target percentages
- Increase public awareness
- Explore and include the long term benefits to landowners of having a watershed plan
- Emphasize PDR and conservation easement programs
- If the Big Tree idea moves forward, need to protect property owner's rights
- Stewardship groups should include large property owners
- Consider tax reductions for RPA, maybe temporary reductions
- What are the County's plans for the 17% of the watershed that it owns?
- Document what percent of the watershed is available for development
- Why is County able to do things that private folks can't? Example: construction of the school sites without sediment control – lots of sediment
- Need provisions for developers to keep silt out of creek
- Where is the funding for land that owners can't use, such as wetlands?
- How do we know whether shoreline erosion is actually caused by boat wake? How can we get that studied?
- Reword the following strategic action to clarify the word *damaged*: "Identify areas within the watershed where riparian corridors have been damaged, disturbed, etc...." Some activities in the buffer predate the buffer rules.

2. What are the most important strategic actions to include in the plan?

- Include large property owners in stewardship groups
- Need to set example on James City County property
- Developer education on Better Site Design principals and practice
- Use Freedom Park for education
- Keep collecting water quality data.
- Need better control of development process – lack of development has kept watershed clean
- Identify funding sources – dam repairs, other actions
- Need commonsense in government – all government.